

REMARKS

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. The Examiner has pointed out the use of the term "or". Applicant has deleted the objected to term and as such, claim 12 is now considered acceptable.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 9, 14-16, 18-19 and 24-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Applicant has amended claims 1 and 16, independent claims herein, to emphasize the fact that the method is for presenting point information to a user at a time of merchandise sales, i.e., offering a prescribed service at the time of use corresponding to the points that the user has accumulated at the time of the merchandise sales. To do this, the system, as recited in claim 16, is a point issuing means which presents to users of the system, point information on when the merchandise is sold, as well as service providing means which offers a service related to the points accumulated by the user at the time of the use of the automatic vending machine. This feature of the method and system is not shown or suggested by the cited reference of Deaton et al. Accordingly, the above-noted claims are patentable thereover.

Claims 3, 6-8, 17 and 20-23 have been rejected as being obvious over Deaton et al. in view of Hoffberg et al. The Examiner is using Hoffberg et al. for teaching of a method and system wherein the presentation of the point information is performed by inputting point information to a communications equipment of the user and including a service providing means for providing the service at the time of use of the automatic vending machine. Such a method and system are not described or suggested by the art, and in particular, are not described or suggested by the patent to Deaton et al., either alone or in combination with Hoffberg et al.

Claims 10-13 have been rejected as being unpatentable over the patent to Deaton et al. in view of Roshkoff. The Examiner has stated that Deaton et al. teaches all the limitations of claims 10 and 11 and it would have been obvious to modify Deaton et al. to include attaching, in advance, to a merchandise, a printed matter in which the point information is printed and that the point information is selectively concealed by removable concealing member because it would enhance the capability of the system. Applicant has amended claims 10-13 so that claim 10 now

Serial No. 09/672,476

recites that the method includes the step of presenting the point information to the user. Further, claims 10-13 each depend upon, inter alia, claim 1 which as set forth above is patentable by reason of presenting the point information at the point of sale and offering the prescribed service at the point of sale which is not described or suggested by the patent to Deaton et al. either alone or in combination with Roshkoff.

Applicant hereby requests reconsideration and re-examination thereof.

With the above amendments and the remarks, this application is considered ready for allowance, and Applicants earnestly solicit an early notice of same. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerald T. Shekleton
Registration No. 27,466

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WELSH & KATZ, LTD.
120 South Riverside Plaza
22nd Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3913
Telephone: 312/655-1500